

CITY OF MESA

MINUTES OF THE PLANNING AND ZONING BOARD
STUDY SESSION

Held in the City of Mesa Council Chamber (Lower Level)
May 19, 2009 at 7:30 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Pat Esparza, Chair
Frank Mizner, Vice Chair
Randy Carter
Beth Coons
Scott Perkinson

MEMBERS ABSENT

Ken Salas (excused)
Chell Roberts (excused)

OTHERS PRESENT

John Wesley
Tom Ellsworth
Lesley Davis
Debbie Archuleta
Angelica Guevara
Gordon Sheffield
Jeff McVay

Andrea Moore
Susan Demmitt
Rhett Evans
Tyler Wright

Chairperson Esparza declared a quorum present and the meeting was called to order at 7:30 a.m.

1. Review items on the agenda for the May 20, 2009 regular Planning & Zoning hearing.

The items on the May 20, 2009, agenda were discussed. No formal action was taken.

2. Conduct a Public Meeting on the following General Plan Amendment:

Chairperson Esparza opened the Public Meeting for the General Plan Amendments.

Randy Carter recused himself from any discussion of the cases.

- a. **GPMInor08-11 (District 6)** 8260 East Baseline Road. Located west of the Loop 202 and north of Baseline Road (14.5± acres). Minor General Plan Amendment. This request will amend the Mesa 2025 General Plan land use designation for the site from Mixed Use Residential (MUR) to High Density Residential 15+ du/acre (HDR 15+). Loren & Colette Jessen; Jessco Dev. LLC, owner; Sean Lake; Pew and Lake, PLC, applicant.
COMPANION CASE Z08-62. CONTINUED FROM THE SEPTEMBER 18, 2008, THE OCTOBER 16, 2008, DECEMBER 18, 2008, FEBRUARY 19, 2009 AND APRIL 15, 2009 HEARINGS.

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- b. **GPMInor09-03 (District 6)** The 8200 to 8500 blocks of East Baseline Road (north side). Located west of the Loop 202 and north of Baseline Road (54± acres). Minor General Plan Amendment. This request will amend the Mesa 2025 General Plan land use designation for the site from Mixed Use Residential to High Density Residential 15+ du/acre (20± acres) and Neighborhood Commercial (34± acres). David Glimcher, GVSW 202/60 LLC, owner; Susan Demmitt, Beus Gilbert PLLC, applicant.

Tom Ellsworth explained that both General Plan Amendments handle essentially the same site and the analysis for both is the same. The request was a change from mixed use residential to high density residential, 15+. The intent was to develop a mixed use activity center that includes more than 30% high density residential. The current General Plan designation allows for a maximum 30% to be used for residential. All together the requested changes overall amount to 50% of the property being for residential. Staff is recommending approval.

Boardmember Perkinson confirmed that staff is recommending approval of the General Plan Amendments but not the zoning cases.

There was no one present from the public to discuss these cases.

3. Hear an update on upcoming text amendment to the Mesa 2025 General Plan (GPMInor09-05) scheduled for May 20, 2009 Planning & Zoning Board hearing.

- a. **GPMInor09-05** Text Amendment to the Mesa 2025 General Plan. (All Council Districts). Minor General Plan Amendment to amend Section 9.0 with updated areas targeted for future parks and recreation facilities.

Andrea Moore of the Parks Department explained there is a chapter in the General Plan that they are proposing to amend. Chapter 9 which contains target areas for future parks, outlines existing parks and has operational goals. They have been working with the Parks Board for over a year. They feel the targets in the 2025 master plan are fairly ambitious. They propose to lower the expectations. They also want to extend the timeframe out to 2030. Ms. Moore explained the attachments included in the Boardmember packets. Since 2002 the City has been able to acquire some parcels for future park facilities; however, they have not been able to develop any of the parks. The goals for park acres per 1,000 population would go from 6 acres per 1,000 people to 4 acres per 1,000 people.

Boardmember Coons questioned if new recreation centers would be done in conjunction with Mesa Schools. The answer was they would be free standing, in the center of the City, out near the DMB site and at an existing site at Countryside Park near 32 Street and Southern. She wondered why there was still a golf course proposed. Ms. Moore stated the City golf courses are still busy in East Mesa and the golf course was proposed at Red Mountain Park.

Boardmember Carter wondered why the population projection was revised downward by about 50,000. He questioned if the Phoenix Mesa Gateway area was considered in

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those figures.

Boardmember Coons was concerned that the revisions were so far down from where they were. She thought it was very important to a City to have parks, greenbelts, open areas, and recreation for the citizens. She understood there financial realities, but what is important.

Boardmember Mizner stated Boardmember Coons comments reflected what the comments had been from the public. Some stated this is reality, other said let's keep the goals because you need to have goals.

Boardmember Perkinson wondered why we need to lower the goals if they are for 2025. The people voted for the plan. If we don't hit it, we don't.

Ms. Moore stated the hope in creating the new plan was to make it more achievable so we don't fall so far behind that it get placed on the shelf and not looked at again. Master plans get revised every few years and it could be revised again.

Mr. Rhett Evans, the Parks Recreation and Facilities Director then spoke and stated this has been debated for several years. When they created the master plan back in 2002 it equated to 800 million dollars in development. The revised plan would be a total of 200 million. They still had a big task to try to raise 200 million dollars. In the 8 years he had been here the City had acquired some property, but of the 2002 plan there was less than 5% completed. They didn't want to be so broad in their scope that nothing ever got accomplished. He thought the new plan did a good job of spreading the projects out throughout the City.

Boardmember Carter wondered why if the City was going to update the entire General Plan in 2010, was there a danger that the plan would be revised way down further during that process. Why not wait until the whole General Plan is updated. Mr. Evans stated they were a component of that, and they are looking at their area so they can begin looking at Park's bonds or whatever and how that relates to the overall City was something they would have to work through.

Boardmember Coons suggested that when the General Plan is updated, the people who sit on the committees should be involved in the whole General Plan. If you are only looking at a small portion of the General Plan they want their portion to be 100% of the pie.

There was no one present from the public wishing to speak on this item.

4. Planning Director's Updates:

- a. Update on site plan modification for 1984 W Main Street.

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Mr. Wesley stated that Councilmember Kavanaugh had submitted a letter appealing the Board's decision. The applicant has decided to withdraw the application.

b. Presentation on information gained at National Planning Conference

Mr. Wesley explained some of the topics at the National Planning Conference.

Many conference sessions focused on sustainability, green development, and new urbanism. Underlying issues had to do with health, environmental impacts, quality of life, etc. Common threads through many sessions were the need for more mixed use to reduce reliance on the automobile and improve walkability,

New planning models look more at the form and character of developments. We should look at neighborhoods, which are primarily residential, with elements of commercial; districts which are primarily your core office and retail areas with components of residential mixed in; and corridors that connect those two types together. Then as we identify those areas, we analyze the character of those places. What makes those areas unique? Desert Uplands versus Lehi, versus Dobson Ranch. What is there currently and how do we want them to evolve over time?

Also looking at the community in terms of areas that are stable and doing well, versus those that are evolving and changing slowly over time, versus transforming areas, which can be greenfield areas like the Phoenix-Mesa Gateway area, and also redevelopment areas. We should look at economic development, transportation and land use together rather than independently.

Another big change is to look at the public realm between the developments. Those public spaces between the buildings really become the primary area for public interaction, defines the nature of the City. It shouldn't just be a place to get as many cars through as possible. Establish plans and ordinances to achieve the goals we have for the community. They felt walkable urbanism should be the default of regulations and plans rather than suburban being the default. The benefits include improved health, lower transportation costs, lower infrastructure costs, stronger sense of place and community and increased sustainability of the community as a whole.

Boardmember Mizner stated he was recently in Europe and did not rent a car for three weeks. The transportation system was wonderful. The major streets had shops with residential above the shops. It was very walkable and pleasant. The streets here are so wide and create heat.

Mr. Wesley stated that obviously not every area of Mesa can become a walkable urban area, but we can identify areas where it is appropriate.

Mr. Mizner wondered how you change areas like Dobson Ranch with our woeful public transportation.

Chair Esparza stated that the first step needs to be embracing the form based code and looking ahead to what spaces could possibly transition into. How can it resolve? She stated last year she was involved in the AZ One Reality Check and will be involved in AZ One Revisited. She wondered how the City of Mesa actively engages in that type of growth. Mr. Wesley stated the

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main way was MAG.

Boardmember Carter stated he had trouble with the whole concept of what was being done. He stated the problem was you have east coast or urban west coast planners who come in and say this is what you have to do. He did not think this would be practical in the near future for Mesa, until there was funding for it. He stated people do not want to walk in 118° or when it rains. He understood there were goals that were good and could be incorporated into the City of Mesa but to embrace the entire urbanism type of thought pattern for a suburban designed area that really won't be that urban for at least a century, seems overkill. He thought it would be tying the hands of developers who would have to fund everything because the City won't pay for infrastructure and light rail.

Gordon Sheffield stated that Mesa for the most part as an urban organism is only about 60 years old. It was a small farm town until the 60's. The City is just getting used to the idea of being a City. The idea that the only type of residential opportunities are single family residences is probably not a very diverse system. Just because you provide opportunities for more urban systems to happen along transportation systems does not mean you do away with all the other things that made you successful in the first place. There is room for both; especially the areas in the middle can be more urbane. There will be transitions. There will always be the Lehi area and Las Sendas, but there could be urban areas in the Fiesta Area, the Downtown, and possibly the Superstition Springs, and Mesa Proving Grounds area.

5. Minutes – submit any corrections, additions, deletions.

None.

The meeting adjourned at 8:33 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John Wesley, Secretary
Planning Director

***NOTE: Audiotapes of the Planning & Zoning Study Sessions are
available in the Planning Division Office for review.***

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